



ETZ CHAIM SYNAGOGUE

# THE ETZ CHAIM BULLETIN

## MESSAGE FROM THE RABBI

As we are on the cusp of the month of Adar, we once again read the parsha of Shekalim this Shabbos. This was the directive that G-d communicated to Moshe that Israelites contribute a half shekel for this national campaign. This campaign had a dual purpose. Firstly, the donated silver was ultimately melted and used for the construction of the Mishkan/Tabernacle. It was also done for the first national census. Instead of counting heads, we were told to contribute a half shekel coin. However, many coins were counted was the amount of people that were accounted for in the census.

I have often wondered, why couldn't everyone just contribute a shekel? Was there any reason for the frugality here? After all the proceeds went to the construction of the Mishkan/Tabernacle and the more funds collected would just make this fundraising campaign that more successful?

Upon reflection, the half-shekel contribution does teach us a great lesson. It reflects the notion that although each and every individual is valuable and significant, we are only part of something that is much greater than the sum of all of our parts. Klal Yisroel is not just a collection of individuals. Rather, we are a nation in which each tribe uniquely contributes in a way which cannot be duplicated. Everyone has a special purpose and mission. Unfortunately, we tend to hear how one individual or group disparages another and claims the other contributions are unworthy. Yet, as we know the Kohanim, Levites and Israelites all contributed to weaving the larger tapestry of Klal Yisroel. This fundamental lesson manifests itself precisely with the contribution of the half shekel. Let's remember there are other Jews that contribute a half shekel in their unique way.

Have a Great Shabbos,  
*Rabbi Yaakov Fisch*

## PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Following the revelation at Sinai, G-d legislates a series of laws for the people of Israel. These include the laws of the indentured servant; the penalties for murder, kidnapping, assault and theft; civil laws pertaining to redress of damages, the granting of loans and the responsibilities of the "Four Guardians"; and the rules governing the conduct of justice by courts of law.

Also included are laws warning against mistreatment of foreigners; the observance of the seasonal festivals, and the agricultural gifts that are to be brought to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem; the prohibition against cooking meat with milk; and the mitzvah of prayer. Altogether, the Parshah of Mishpatim contains 53 mitzvot-23 imperative commandments and 30 prohibitions.

G-d promises to bring the people of Israel to the Holy Land, and warns them against assuming the pagan ways of its current inhabitants.

The people of Israel proclaim, "We will do and we will hear all that G-d commands us." Leaving Aaron and Hur in charge in the Israelite camp, Moses ascends Mount Sinai and remains there for forty days and forty nights to receive the Torah from G-d.

## CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Candle Lighting 5:52PM  
Mincha 5:55PM

## SHABBOS MORNING

Daf Yomi Class 7:45AM  
Shachari 8:30AM  
Sephardic Minyan 8:30AM  
Latest Shema 9:56AM  
Unlocking the Closed Book 10:00am  
with Rabbi Feigenbaum

Following services, everyone is invited to kiddush in the social hall sponsored by Benjay & Marissa Kempner in honor of Benjay's return and thanks to the community for all their support.

## SHABBOS AFTERNOON

Nothing New Under the Sun  
with Rabbi Fisch 4:55PM  
Mincha 5:40PM  
Followed by Seuda Shlishis  
Maariv & Havdallah 6:54PM

## SERVICES THIS WEEK:

**SHACHARIS**  
Sunday 8:15AM  
Monday-Wednesday 6:45AM  
Thursday-Friday 6:30PM  
(Rosh Chodesh)

**MINCHA**  
Sunday-Thursday 6:00PM  
Additional Minyan  
for Maariv 8:30PM

## TORAH READINGS

Parsha Mishpatim Page: 416  
Parshas Shekalim Page: 484  
Haftorah Shekalim Page 1212

# ADULT EDUCATION & EVENTS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

**Chaburah after Shacharis**

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12

**7:30 pm Mini series continues Chasidic Journeys with Dr. Elliott Rosenbaum**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

**7:30 pm Talmud Class with Rabbi Rabinowitz**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

**8:45 am Java For the Soul with Rabbi Feigenbaum**

**12:30 pm Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Feigenbaum**

A very special thank you to Dr. Mitchell Levine  
for sponsoring hosting in memory of his parents Avraham & Bayla Levine.

**7:30 pm Practical Halacha on the Laws of Shabbos with Rabbi Weiss**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

**11:30 am Morning Club with Rabbi Schochet**

SHABBOS, FEBRUARY 17

**5:00 pm Nothing New Under the Sun with Rabbi Fisch**

**10:00 pm The Parsha Alive with Henny Fisch**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

**JCA and Etz Chaim Co-sponsor a Family Hamentashen Bake at 12:00pm  
Jewish Community Alliance**

Aside from baking our three-cornered festival treats, there will be games and crafts for the children, and a special learning session for the adults. This event is free and is for the entire family. Please contact Rabbi Feigenbaum for more information.

# SHABBOS YOUTH GROUPS

Babysitting is a supervised free play program for boys and girls ages infant through 3 years old and is staffed by professional sitters.

**Gan Shabbat** is for boys and girls in nursery and Pre-K and is led by Sara Brown. The children are entertained with stories, games, songs, and organized activities.

**Tot Shabbat** is for boys and girls in 'K' and 1st grade. The children are entertained with stories and songs; they pray together and play together with organized activities led by our teenage group leaders Nechama Finkelstein & Carlie Rosenthal.

**Junior Congregation** now meets with distinct groups for boys and girls. The boy's group is led by Rabbi A.Y. Cohen and is for grades 2-3, and the girl's group is led by Rachel Shyken and is for grades 2 through B'nei Mitzvah. The children begin their morning with group morning prayers and continue with questions on the parsha, stories, and other activities.

**Emtza** is our newest group and is for boys in grades 4 through B'nei Mitzvah. The group is led by Joey Hamaoui. The boys begin their morning with group morning prayers and continue with discussions about the parsha and other activities.

**NCSY Tefillah Workshop** is a discussion based group dedicated to giving deeper insight into the Parsha and general hashkafa and is for boys and girls b'nei mitzvah through 12th grade. This group is currently studying Ethics of Our Fathers and is led by Joey Hamaoui. This group meets from **11:15am-12:00pm**.

## NCSY & YOUTH

### **Yom Rishon Enrichment Program: Sunday, February 11 from 9:15am-10:15am**

Fun and friendly enrichment class on Sunday morning. Rabbi Mayer Rabinowitz will teach this class. The class is open to boys and girls of the entire Jewish community in grades K-2. Students will learn about the weekly Torah portion, Prayer, Basic Mitzvos, Middos, and Jewish Holidays. To register, please contact the Etz Chaim office at 904-262-3565 x7.

### **Torah and Pizza will return Monday, February 19**

Grades 8-12 Join Rabbi A.Y. on Monday evenings as we debate how Torah knowledge relates to contemporary issues. This brand new class is open to boys and girls in grades 8-12. Piping hot pizza and drinks will be served!!

### **B'nei Mitzvah Enrichment Program will return Tuesday, February 20**

All parents are strongly encouraged to register your children for this class. Rabbi A.Y. teaches the class and focuses on building a strong Jewish knowledge on various topics such as the weekly Torah Portion, Mitzvos, and the Holidays. This class is open to boys and girls in grades 5-7. Snacks and drinks are served.

## DAILY CLASSES

### Daf Yomi

Weekdays

Shabbos

Sundays & legal holiday

**6:00am**

**7:45am**

**7:30am**

Please join us each morning before services in the Mirkis Chapel. Hot coffee is served.

### Limud Yomi

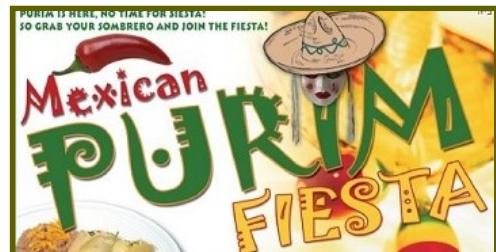
Rabbi Fisch will teach a brief lesson on gratitude following Minyan every morning.

### Mishna Yomi

Rabbi Fisch will teach a brief Mishna between Mincha & Maariv every evening. We are studying Tractate Kiddushin

## SPOTLIGHT ON A SHUL EVENT

Etz Chaim & Torah Academy  
present  
**Purim Extravaganza**



Join us Thursday, March 1 at 5:30pm  
Fun for the entire family!  
Festive meal, live music children's  
activities and much more!

## A LOOK INSIDE WINTER FNL WITH THE TWINS FROM FRANCE



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

David Ferman  
Lon Smolensky  
Jay Lipper  
Scot Ackerman  
Rabbi Ephraim Weiss  
Miriam Chefer  
Andrew Jaffa  
Beth Beyer  
Avi Zaguri  
Kim Robbins  
Rachelli Fisch

## REFUAH SHELEMAH

Neal Finkelstein  
Dr. Ed Joseph  
Mercedes Phillips  
Murray Husney  
Elizabeth Hamaoui  
Louis Shapiro  
Martin Schwartz  
Jay Lipper  
Abe Goldenthal  
Phyllis Sprecher  
Susan Goldman  
Bertica Hubsch

## YAHRZEIT

Eugene Borgida  
Harriet Sperber  
Katie Rivkin  
Hyman Roth  
Leah Bennett  
Selma Cooper  
Hyman Melamed  
Otto Senkpiel

# PROFILE OF A MEMBER

## BEJAY KEMPNER



### WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

I was born in Cherry Hill, NJ.

### WHEN DID YOU MOVE TO JACKSONVILLE?

I moved to JAX August 2015.

### WHEN DID YOU JOIN ETZ CHAIM?

I joined Etz Chaim in August of 2015.

### WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY OF ETZ CHAIM?

My fondest memory of Etz Chaim: This is one I wasn't personally present for. I was in Iraq during my sons Bar Mitzvah. I was communicating with the family extensively before and after the event and could feel how instrumental the Etz Chaim community was in helping my family pull it off; from Rabbi Brown tutoring Aidan to the myriad of times the community stepped up to help Marissa. By all accounts, it was an incredibly meaningful and successful day, and I owe Etz Chaim some serious gratitude because of that.

### WHAT ARE YOUR SPECIAL INTERESTS AND HOBBIES?

My special interests and hobbies. Anything active. Playing sports with my kids. Biking with my kids. Going to the beach with my family and running. I absolutely love being outside.

# KOSHER CORNER

## Must one wait six hours to eat meat (for those who wait six hours after meat to eat dairy) after eating aged cheese?

One must wait six hours to eat meat after eating cheese that is aged for six months or longer. The following are a few of the more popular aged cheeses that are aged for six months: Dry Monterey Jack, Cheddar (Medium, Sharp and Aged), Marble Cheese, Parmesan, and Picante Provolone.

**Source: OK Kosher**

## Is the water safe to drink? Israeli startup lets you know.

Lishtot, the Jerusalem-based company, which was founded in 2015, has developed the TestDrop, a key chain-like device that the company says detects contaminants in water such as E. coli, lead, arsenic, mercury, copper and chlorine in just two seconds. All users need to do is point the device at a plastic glass filled with water and bingo: if the device lights up in blue, you have the all-clear to drink. But if the light is red, then stop because something is wrong.

“We can also tell if someone has spit in your water, which is always good to know,” offered Raisch.

Another co-founder, Alan Bauer, developed the technology after discovering that the electric fields in water change when contamination is present, explained Raisch.

The company has developed sensors that can detect these changes in the electric fields. When water is contaminated with heavy metals, chemicals, or even bacteria, the company’s sensors detect changes in the electric fields. Algorithms developed by the firm interpret the information and provide the results, including an alert when there is something in the water that shouldn’t be there. “Right now, we have confirmed in our labs and with third party labs and industrial partners that the technology can detect over 20 different contaminants” at standards dictated by the US Environmental Protection Agency and World Health Organization, Raisch said.

The TestDrop, which sells for \$49.95, connects via Bluetooth to the Lishtot mobile app, where users can track their test history, view more data on their water, including the likelihood of contamination, and distinguish between bottled water, tap water, and natural water from rivers and streams. The results of the test, with pictures and location, can then be sent via Bluetooth to the Global Water Quality Map that the company is creating.

“We want to create a platform for drinking water quality data and information,” said Raisch. “People have no idea what’s in their water and it’s the second most essential resource that nearly everyone on the planet pays for in one way or another. We think people deserve to know more about the water they drink.”

He said he hopes to make Lishtot the go-to place for info about water.

Water quality is one of the “main challenges” faced by society, threatening human health, curbing food production, and hampering economic growth, according to UNESCO, the United Nations arm for international cooperation in education, science, culture and communication. One in nine people worldwide uses drinking water from unimproved and unsafe sources. The organization just this month set up a new World Water Quality Portal that issues information on the quality of freshwater globally, using remote sensing data.

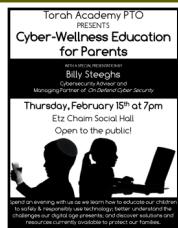
Raisch said the data collected by Lishtot from users will “eventually be the most valuable aspect” of the firm.

The product is already being sold via the company’s website and Raisch said the firm has agreements with distributors globally for the sale of some 100,000 units.

Lishtot, which has been producing its devices in Israel, is now looking to scale up its manufacturing capabilities to meet demand, he said. The US is the main market the company is focusing on, said Raisch, but India also has huge potential. Raisch has just come back from a visit to the Asian giant, as part of a delegation of businesspeople who traveled with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier this month.

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

# UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Torah Academy PTO presents Cyber-Wellness Education for Parents  
Thursday, February 15 7:00pm in the social hall.

Special presentation by Billy Steeghs Cybersecurity Advisor and Managing Partner of On Defend Cyber Security.



Sisterhood Event with Rabbi Ariel Shoshan on February 22 at 7:30pm at the home of Andrea & Steven Mail on Beauclerc for men and women  
"Raising Our Children and Ourselves The Mystical Truth of Ephraim & Menashe"  
Friday, February 23 Rabbi Shoshan will lead Kabbalas Shabbos and deliver the Davar Torah,  
21st Century Joy. 9:30pm Oneg at the home of Rabbi Yaakov & Henny Fisch.  
Shabbos, February 24 Rabbi Shoshan will deliver the sermon "Command" ments & Profound Daily Possibilities, Lecture following kiddush A Practical Guide to Overcome Your Life's Greatest Spiritual Challenges.



Save the Date- Spring Shabbaton with Rav Gav on March 24. More details to follow

**TODAH RABAH TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE & BUSINESSES WHO ARE GENEROUS SPONSORS OF THE CASINO NIGHT GALA**

THE ABEL LAW FIRM  
DR. SCOT & ALEXANDRA ACKERMAN  
AMERIS BANK  
CHARLES & ELEANOR BERMAN  
BARRY & SIMA CHEFER  
RABBI YAakov & HENNY FISCH  
HARDAGE GIDDENS FUNERAL HOME  
KEN & ALLISON JACOBS  
JIMMY & IRENE JAFFA  
DAVID & RISE PEARL  
DR. GARY & NANCY PERLMAN  
DAVID & KIM ROBBINS  
STEVEN & DEBORAH SHAPIRO  
AVI & RACHEL SMITH  
ARTHUR & VANESSA SOLOMON  
WATSON COMMERCIAL REALTY  
DR. GARY & PENINA WELTMAN  
DR. EUGENE & BRENDA WOLCHOK

Sponsor our major fundraising event of the year!  
Visit [Etzchaim.org](http://Etzchaim.org) or call the office at 262-3565 for more information



# PARSHAS MSHPATIM

One of the many diverse and detailed subjects covered in this week's Torah reading is that of the laws regarding lending money to a fellow Jew. And though the language of the verse is couched in a conditional manner – "if" or "when" you will lend money – the rabbis of the Talmud interpreted this as an imperative – a positive commandment requiring one to be open to lend money to those who are in need of temporary aid.

There are many laws, details and technicalities attached to this commandment and this short article is not the place to address them. But the overriding principle is clear. Lending money to others and helping them to extricate themselves from otherwise burdensome circumstances is a positive commandment of the Torah.

Though we all know and sense that lending money to someone goes against our emotional and rational sense of being. It is much easier for a person to donate money to another human being or to a cause than to lend that money. We are immediately beset by the problem that perhaps the person will never wish to or be able to repay that debt. If I gave him the money and that is that and I have erased the matter from my mind and consciousness. However when I lend money, that alone is omnipresent with me. The borrower will avert my gaze when I meet him on the street and the lender will feel just as uncomfortable as does the borrower. Lending money to an individual always causes an awkward interpersonal relationship.

Perhaps this may be the very reason why the Torah ordains a commandment to lend money to another individual. The Torah wishes to break down our selfish instincts and self-interest. Whether we wish to or not, we become invested in the life and activities of the one who borrowed the money. We have reason to pray for his success because only then will he somehow be able to discharge his obligation.

That is why the Torah states that the poor man, the borrower, is "with you." The relationship of borrower and lender is not merely a financial arrangement but it is a deeply personal one that has many ramifications. As King Solomon pointed out, a borrower feels one's self in bondage to the lender.

This is a psychological truism that also has practical halachic consequences. But it is incumbent upon the lender to mitigate such feelings to the extent possible. The lender cannot pursue repayment of his loan in a manner that is too intense. And this is especially true if the lender is aware that the borrower really does not have any extra funds with which to currently repay the loan.

Yet, the Torah does provide strong legal action on the part of the lender to recover his loan. He justifies this on the basis that if it becomes too difficult to collect on a loan then people will stop lending money and that will make for a very selfish and ultimately disastrous society.

Shabbat shalom

Rabbi Berel Wein

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